



## NEWS RELEASE

### Media Contact:

Sarah Ardalani  
Public Information Officer  
213-257-2000  
[SArdalani@da.lacounty.gov](mailto:SArdalani@da.lacounty.gov)  
Twitter: @LADAOOffice

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## Woman Sentenced to Prison for Murder, Robbery in Whittier

A 30-year-old woman was sentenced today to 23 years to life in state prison for stabbing another woman to death and then breaking into a store, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

On Jan. 21, a jury found Vanessa Celaya of Rubidoux guilty of two felony counts: second-degree murder and first-degree residential robbery in case VA136733.

Jurors also found true a special allegation that Celaya personally used a deadly and dangerous weapon, a knife, in the commission of the crime.

Deputy District Attorney Andrea Mader, who prosecuted the case, said on Sept. 5, 2014 about 11 p.m., Celaya walked up to victim Michelle Young in Whittier and the two women had a verbal exchange before the defendant stabbed Young several times. The victim was pronounced dead at the scene.

Following the assault, Celaya broke into a tire shop, threatened a security guard inside and demanded a change of clothing before leaving the store, according to the prosecutor.

Authorities were called and law enforcement apprehended Celaya near the store.

The case was investigated by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

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### [About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.